

Cryptosporidiosis

What? How? Where?

What? *Cryptosporidium* is a germ that causes a diarrheal illness called cryptosporidiosis. This germ is able to survive for long periods of time in the environment, even properly chlorinated pools in some cases.

How? *Cryptosporidium* is found in the feces of infected people and animals. It is spread when someone swallows contaminated water. Any water source can become contaminated from contact with the feces of an infected person or animal.

Where? *Cryptosporidium* can be found in swimming pools, hot tubs, interactive fountains, and natural bodies of water (lakes, rivers, oceans, etc.). Other sources include contaminated drinking water or food, and direct hand-to-mouth fecal contact.

Prevention

You can protect yourself from getting and spreading cryptosporidiosis by doing the following:

- Don't swim when you have diarrhea.
- Practice good pool hygiene by showering with soap and water before and after swimming.
- Wash your hands with warm soap and water after using the restroom.
- Don't swallow water from recreational swim facilities, and avoid getting it in your mouth.

For Parents of Young Kids:

- Take your kids on regular bathroom breaks. Don't wait until you hear "I have to go!"
- Change diapers in a bathroom, not at poolside.
- Wash your child thoroughly, especially their rear-end.


People who are at greater risk of contracting cryptosporidiosis are:


- Swimmers who swallow contaminated water
- Parents of infected children
- People who care for infected individuals.

Symptoms

The most common symptom is frequent watery diarrhea that can begin a few days to a few weeks after infection. Other symptoms include: abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, fever, dehydration and weight loss. Symptoms can last 1 to 2 weeks.


Should you experience any of the above symptoms, seek diagnosis and treatment from your healthcare provider.





Recreational Water Illnesses
Fact Sheet

Information from this fact sheet, as well as additional information is available from:
CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/rwi/illnesses/cryptosporidium.html>
& http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/crypto/gen_info/infect.html
WHO: http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/dwq/en/admicrob5.pdf



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